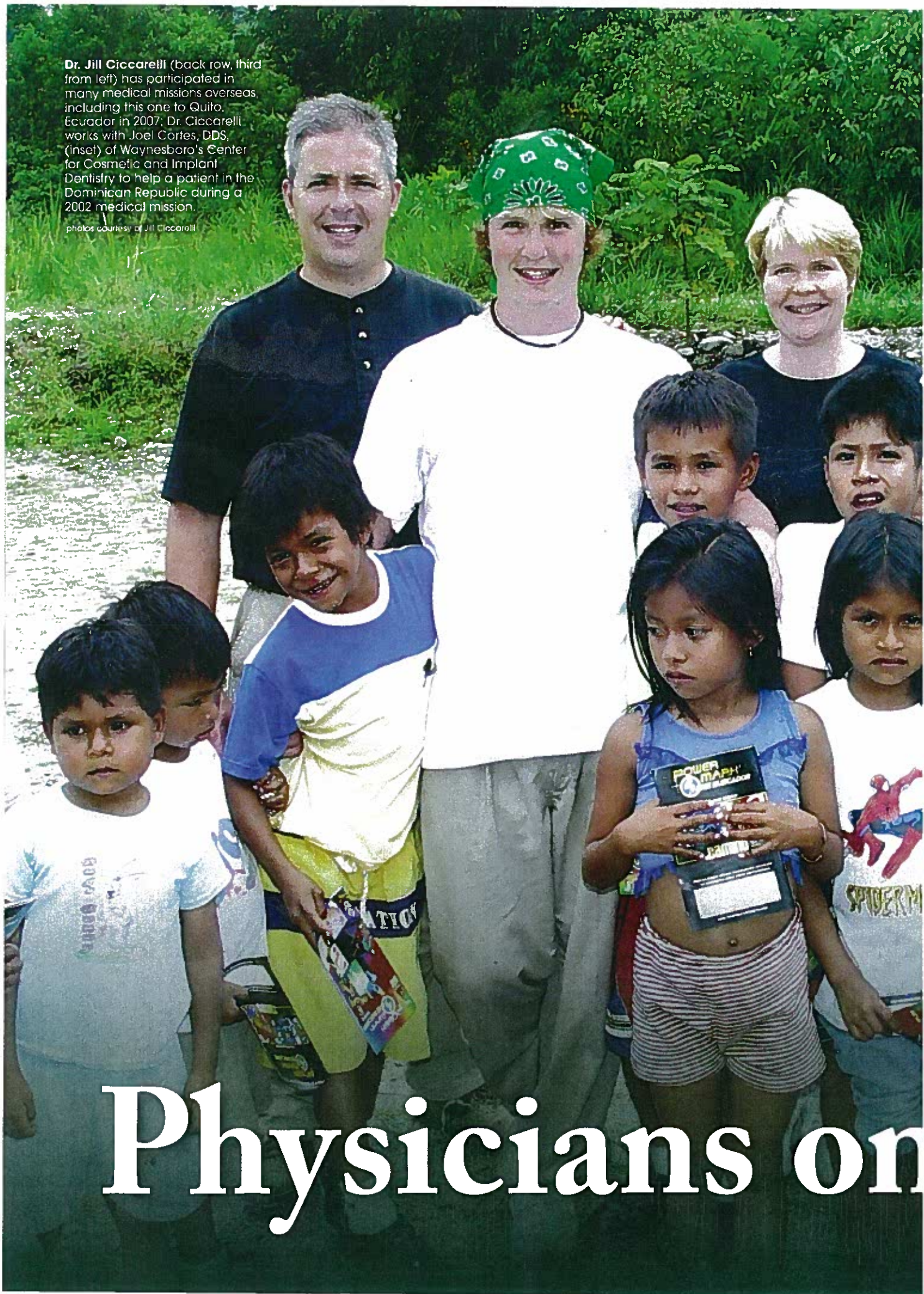


Dr. Jill Ciccarelli (back row, third from left) has participated in many medical missions overseas, including this one to Quito, Ecuador in 2007; Dr. Ciccarelli works with Joel Cortes, DDS, (inset) of Waynesboro's Center for Cosmetic and Implant Dentistry to help a patient in the Dominican Republic during a 2002 medical mission.

photos courtesy of Jill Ciccarelli



Physicians on

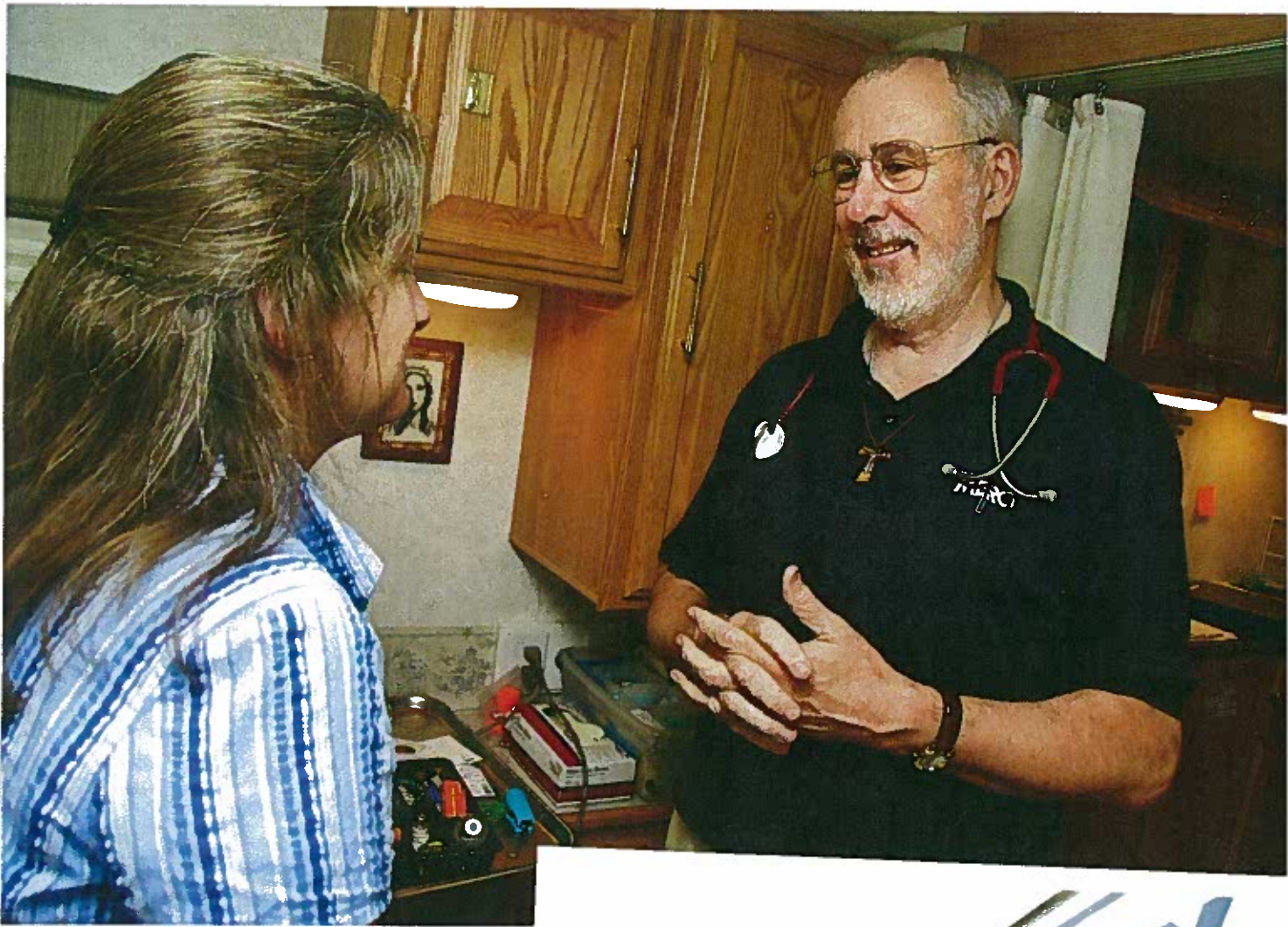


Missions

Local Doctors Volunteer at Home and Abroad to Bring Healing to Those in Need.

by Anne Flentgen Rich +
photos by Seth Freeman

Warren Baker waits his turn in the dentist's chair at the Mission of Mercy mobile clinic. He's worked on road construction crews, at a discount store and as a mail sorter, but he could never afford insurance. Now in his 50s, Warren says he's been coming to the clinic for several years. "They give me my medicine. They check my blood sugar and blood pressure," he says. Marta Marroquin is awaiting her appointment with the doctor to monitor diabetes and high blood pressure. "We cannot afford a doctor," she explains. Through a bureaucratic glitch, Marta says, her Medicaid coverage has been temporarily suspended.



Dr. Michael Sullivan (above) consults with a patient during a recent Mission of Mercy stop in Frederick; Dr. Sullivan founded the nonprofit mobile clinic (inset) with his wife, Dr. Gianna Talone-Sullivan, with the goal to "restore dignity by healing through love."

Warren and Marta are among the 46 million Americans who, according to the National Coalition on Health Care, are without health insurance. Both have

"FOR THOSE OF US IN MEDICAL PROFESSION WHO SEE IT AS A CALLING, THIS IS A GIFT WE SHOULD SHARE WITH OTHERS. "

chronic health conditions that could result in expensive emergency treatments if they didn't have access to preventive care. Without local doctors' generosity, both Warren and Marta — and many



other area residents like them — would likely end up in emergency rooms. But doctors do volunteer their time, utilizing skills that are both a profession and a calling, and their choice to do so gives uninsured and underinsured patients like Warren and Marta a place to go for the treatment they need. When doctors volunteer, says Dr. Martin Gallagher, founder of the Community

Free Clinic of Washington County, there is a "certain credibility since it's not tax-deductible. They do it for very humanitarian reasons."

LOCAL HEALING, LOCAL CARE
Why volunteer? "It's just the right thing to do," says Dr. Dona Hobart, a surgeon with Robinwood Surgical Associates who offers low-cost services through



Volunteering at Hagerstown's Community Free Clinic gives Dr. George Long the opportunity to get to know patients better than he ever could as an emergency room doctor.

Helping the Healing
Learn More About the Area Organizations
Providing Care for the Uninsured.

Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening Program (BCCP)

The BCCP provides low-cost or free medical care for Maryland women between the ages of 40–65 who do not have insurance to cover services such as mammograms and Pap tests. For more information, call 1-800-477-9774 or visit fha.maryland.gov (Maryland Family Health Administration) and click on "Cancer Surveillance and Control," then "Breast and Cervical Cancer Program."

Donated Dental Services (DDS)

DDS provides free dental care for Maryland residents who have physical or mental handicaps. For more information or to volunteer, call 1-877-337-7746 or visit www.msda.com (Maryland State Dental Association) and click on "Resources for Dentists," then "Maryland Foundation of Dentistry for the Handicapped-Donated Dental Program."

Community Free Clinic

Established in 1990, the Community Free Clinic serves uninsured patients by providing medical care and prescriptions free of charge at its 24 Mill Street office in Hagerstown; in 2008 alone the clinic provided 14,936 patient visits. To get information, make a donation, or inquire about volunteer opportunities, visit www.cfcwc.com or call 301-733-9234.

Mission of Mercy

This mobile medical and dental clinic, which, as a nonprofit organization, offers services free of charge, has provided more than 250,000 patient visits since 1994. Regularly scheduled clinic stopping points include the Frederick Church of the Brethren at 201 Fairview Ave., among other Maryland and Pennsylvania locations. To volunteer or make a donation, visit www.amissionofmercy.org or call 301-682-5683.

the state's Breast Cancer and Cervical Cancer Program (BCCP). The program offers breast and cervical cancer education, screening and follow-up services to Maryland women ages 40 to 64 who do not meet income requirements and do not have medical insurance that covers the costs of screening. Each Maryland jurisdiction relies on physicians like

Dr. Hobart who are willing to perform these services in exchange for a significantly reduced rate of pay. As Dr. Hobart sees it, participating in BCCP makes sense. "If you're going to treat breast cancer in the community, you have to treat everybody."

Organizations similar to BCCP give other medical professionals

opportunities to put their talents to use to benefit the whole community. In addition to working alongside her husband at their Hagerstown dental practice, the Center for Advanced Periodontics and Implantology, Dr. Rebecca Bye volunteers her time and talents to meet the dental needs of underserved patients with disabilities, senior citizens and individuals with

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Dr. Dan McDougal and the other medical professionals who volunteer at the Community Free Clinic serve the growing number of uninsured and underinsured residents of Washington County, who are primarily the working poor.

*DAN McDOUGAL, MD.
MEDICAL DIRECTOR*

medical challenges. She is paid nothing or little for her work through Donated Dental Services (DDS). "For those of us in the medical profession who see it as calling, this is a gift we should share with others," Dr. Bye says.

She and Dr. Hobart agree that their pro bono efforts would be more challenging, if not impossible, without support from their colleagues in the local medical community. Partners including peers who practice complementary areas of medicine, test or lab result providers and specialists to whom volunteering doctors refer patients amplify the effectiveness of their work. Hagerstown dentists Bruce Burley and Trumer Wagner have pitched in to help Dr. Bye serve her DDS patients, for example, and medical service providers such as Washington County's Diagnostic Imaging Services offer reduced rates on test results for Dr. Hobart's BCCP patients. "There are a lot of people with good hearts in this community," Dr. Bye says.

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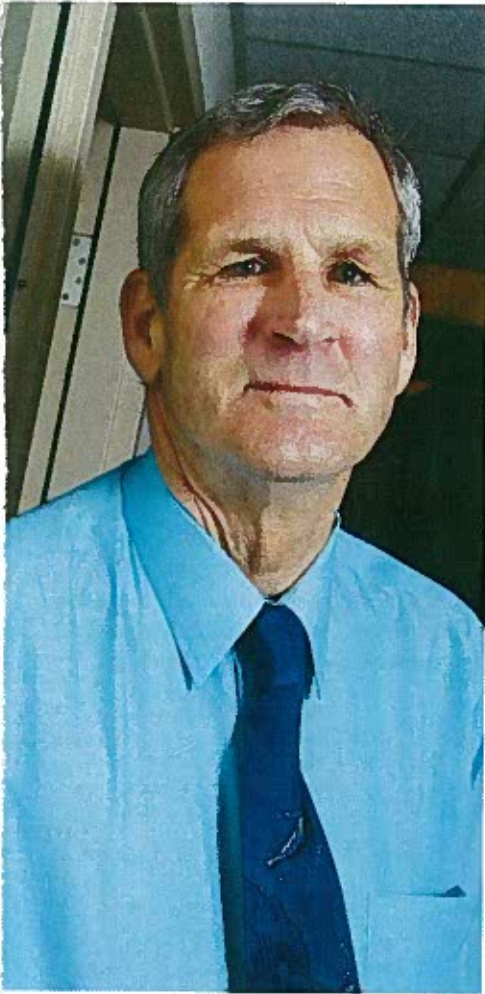
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COMMUNITY CLINIC CARE

You will find a number of them at area medical clinics, including the Community Free Clinic of Washington County in Hagerstown and the Mission of Mercy's free mobile clinic. In place to serve the region's growing number of uninsured and underinsured residents, primarily

"THERE ARE A LOT OF PEOPLE WITH GOOD HEARTS IN THIS COMMUNITY."

the working poor, both clinics rely on the volunteer efforts of doctors and other medical professionals to do their important charitable work. "On television, you hear politicians saying how we need to help the uninsured. That's what we do," says longtime Community Free Clinic volunteer and its current medical director, Dr. Dan McDougal, who works full time as chief medical officer

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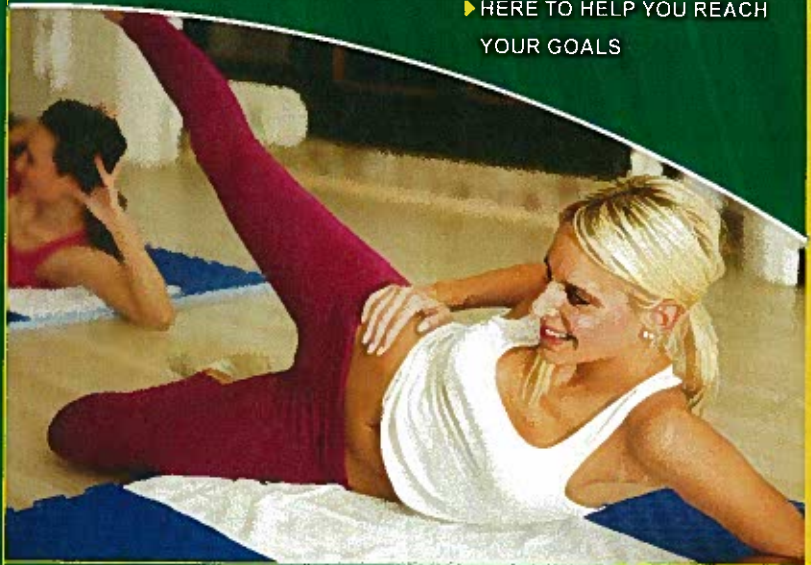
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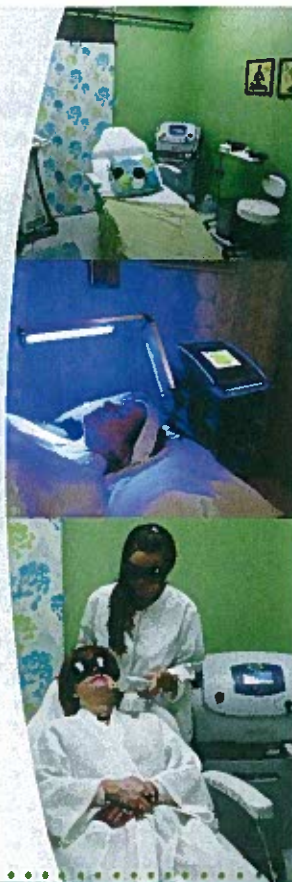
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for Antietam Health Services.

For Dr. George Long, volunteering at the clinic is rewarding on a number of levels. He enjoys the chance to get to know his patients better than he ever could in his primary role as an emergency room doctor. In addition, "Here the only concern is making sure the patient is treated properly," he says. "We can practice medicine the way we wish it could be."

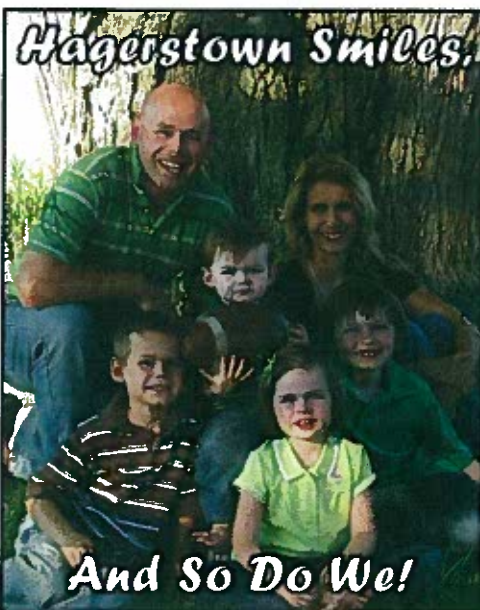
That's exactly what Dr. Gianna Talon Sullivan and her husband, Dr. Michael Sullivan, are doing through Mission of Mercy. They realized their dream of starting a free mobile medical and dental clinic in 1994 to "restore dignity by healing through love," says Dr. Michael

"HERE THE ONLY CONCERN IS MAKING SURE THE PATIENT IS TREATED PROPERLY. WE CAN PRACTICE MEDICINE THE WAY WE WISH IT COULD BE."

Sullivan, who serves as medical director. Today, the nonprofit organization serve patients in Maryland and Pennsylvania and Mission of Mercy has even "given birth" to clinics in Arizona and Texas. Like the Community Free Clinic, Mission of Mercy relies on private donations to fund its efforts. Although some staff members are paid for their administrative work, most doctors and dentists volunteer their services.

"Once you see the patients, it's very rewarding," says Dr. Amaris Little, a Frederick dentist who grew up in Hancock. She recalls patients lining up as early as 3 a.m. to get basic services such as extractions and fillings. "These are people who are truly in need."

Fellow Mission of Mercy volunteer Dr. Gary Schwartz, a retired cardiologist, echoes the satisfaction of aiding mostly hardworking individuals without health insurance — altruistic work he undertakes purely out of "a desire to help others."



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MEETING NEEDS OVERSEAS

As Dr. Jill Ciccarelli and her husband, Chris, who is a nurse, can testify, communities worldwide need medical volunteers. In addition to running a family practice in Williamsport and volunteering at the Community Free Clinic, Dr. Ciccarelli has traveled with her husband to the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Panama, India and Africa on medical mission trips organized through groups such as Community of the Crucified One.

In 2005, with Global Health and Prison Ministries, Dr. Ciccarelli provided care for Panama City prisoners. "One man within the prison had a bullet hole

"ONCE YOU SEE THE PATIENTS, IT'S VERY REWARDING...THESE ARE PEOPLE WHO ARE TRULY IN NEED."

through his back. Another man within the prison had seizures and had hit his head so much that his brain was exposed," she says, describing the dire need for medical care she witnessed. Dr. Ciccarelli considers volunteering part of her calling as a Christian. "The Lord has given me so much. If you go and minister to His people, you can never give back as much as the Lord gives you."

While Ciccarelli's sentiments will strike a chord within many medical caregivers who donate their time and talents, Dr. Louis Lasagna's modern version of the Hippocratic Oath might ring true to all: "I will remember that there is art to medicine as well as science," penned the academic dean of the School of Medicine at Tufts University, "and that warmth, sympathy and understanding may outweigh the surgeon's knife or the chemist's drug." Our local doctors who volunteer certainly live up to that promise. Ask Warren, the Mission of Mercy patient, what he'd do if volunteer medical services weren't available, and his answer is simple, but stark: "I'd suffer." ♥